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NSC BRIEFING

LAOS

- CIRCUMVINTED*
- I. Prime Minister Phoui has ~~withstood~~ *circumvented* major test in National Assembly over currency devaluation. 25X1
- A. He defeated a no-confidence motion by procedural maneuver on 11 October.
- II. Government still faces opposition attacks on other issues.
- A. Extension of present Assembly session from 11 to 30 October gives leftists opportunity to interpellate ~~government~~ and raise another no confidence motion on budget.
- B. Opposition will also probably attempt to emasculate or suppress anti-communist measures such as Civic Action program.
- III. ~~the~~ *Government's* prospects for weathering this assembly and staying in office for some months *are improved though still not good.*
- A. Conservative Rally of Lao People maintained discipline in Assembly despite strong distaste for devaluation.
- ~~B. Opposition has lost its most explosive issue.~~
- B.* Phoui has support of crown prince, army and reformist Committee for the Defense of National Interest.
- IV. *THERE IS STILL DOUBT THAT GOVT. WILL* ~~Government may soon be able to~~ turn attention to vital reforms and anti-subversive measures.
- A. Conservative preoccupation with political maneuvers in Vientiane has given Communist dominated Patriotic Front practically free hand in provinces since May elections.